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11-22-2011

Malian Thick Sorghum and Millet Porridges Decrease Hunger SUCCESS STORY

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MALI

SUCCESS STORY

Malian Thick Sorghum and Millet Porridges Decrease Hunger



Photo by B. Hamaker

Very thick sorghum and millet porridge delays the feeling of hunger

Maliens often experience hunger at the end of the dry season when most of the sorghum and millet grain from the previous crop has already been consumed. A study was recently conducted by the INTSORMIL/IER Project to examine thick sorghum/millet porridge consumption related to preference and satiety (lack of a hungry feeling) in the Sikasso, Segou and Mopti regions of Mali. This was part of a larger study to understand the effect of thick porridges, and delayed glucose delivery to the body, on satiety and overall food consumption. The satiety study was designed so that participants consumed as much tô as they wanted until they felt “full”. Participants were asked at 2 and 4 hours after consumption to judge their feeling of hunger (0=full, 1=slightly hungry, 2=hungry, 3=very hungry). Very thick tô, thick tô, medium tô and thin rice porridge were compared.

The thick porridges were very satiating (hunger satisfying). Satiety study participants revealed large differences in their feeling of hunger 2 and 4 hours after consumption of the porridges of different thicknesses. Notably, participants still felt full 2 hours after eating very thick and thick tô, and after 4 hours only felt slightly hungry. After consuming the control rice porridge, at 4 hours participants felt very hungry.

Villagers eat thicker tô than city dwellers, perhaps related to its satiating effect and extended energy property. Urban populations should be encouraged to consume more sorghum/millet tô by conducting a nationwide publicity campaign with the slogan “*eat sorghum and millet – they are healthy satiating foods (not ‘poor’ foods)*”. This is particularly important at this time of high prices for grain imports. If one million families ate only one more meal of sorghum/millet tô each week (using about 1 kg of flour for the meal), this amounts to about 50,000 metric tonnes of grain a year, which is more than the total wheat imports into Mali in 2008.